

QDVSN MEETING ISSUES PAPER

FOR DISTRIBUTION TO OTHER NETWORKS

KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM QDVSN MEETING ON 24TH & 25TH FEBRUARY 2005

Background information

In the spirit of enhancing information sharing and collaboration between our networks, Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVSN) decided to distribute to other related and like networks and services, relevant issues arising from the QDVSN meetings. In addition, QDVSN recognises that our networks are frequently responding to and discussing the same issues, and the strength that lies in coordinating and sharing information.

After each QDVSN meeting, the QDVSN Secretary can forward to your network/service the key relevant issues arising from the QDVSN meeting.

If you do not feel it is useful for your network/service to receive this information, please do not hesitate to let us know. In addition, if your network/service would like to similarly disseminate information relating to your network/service, we would certainly welcome this.

CMC Report

- Letter received by Wendy that publication will be early March 2005.

National Violence Against Women Campaign

- Pauline, in her WESNET capacity, will be writing to Senator Trish Crossin, Estimates Committee, asking her to elicit where referrals have gone and how the money has been allocated.

D & FV Prevention month

- Funding has been increased, looking into feasibility of bill boards around the region.
- Violence Prevention Team (VPT) no longer lead group, Marketing and Communications branch has taken it over with 'advice' from VPT on content. Launching on 4th May in Brisbane. Awards ceremony 26th May in Brisbane – closing date for applications extended to 21st March. Same theme as last year. Funding submissions have been assessed – letters should go out in the next few weeks.

Telephone safety issues

- Telstra tried hard to stop 1800 number appearing on mobile bill but cannot action this because of legal ramifications. Services need to let clients know that 1800 will show up on their mobile bills.

New proposed service agreements

- Only one service has seen draft service agreement. Concerns around client files especially if seeing children in care – looks like when they turn 18 the files will have to be given to the department.

Telephone link with Legal Aid – Tracey de Simone

- LA Qld received more money from Commonwealth last year and expecting more this year. Should see fewer problems with getting aid for family law matters. Tracey asked the group to inform workers.

- Legal aid looking at guidelines for funding DV and other civil matters. Need to reassess respondent aid because more women being respondents.
- Joined with Griffith University to look at access of women to legal aid funds. Researcher wanted to 'flag' that over second half of year they will be coming up to Cairns and Townsville and hoping to interview people about their experiences of women who don't make it to LA office as well as those who do and are refused.
- Strategic plan being written at Legal Aid for the next three years.
- Emerald reported that agencies were keen for local family law training. There had been some training in Rockhampton but that was three hours away and is difficult for staffing etc. Tracey will talk to Louise Whittaker about this. Possibility of video conferencing in future.

Telephone link with VPT

- VPT no longer policy officers. Now deal with programme management eg service agreements, output specifications, programme logic frameworks etc. No manager yet. Service agreements – related to programme logic and output specifications etc. and these have to be finished by the VPT some time in March.
- Cecilia informed the group that they had a meeting yesterday with Dept Child Safety, VPT and QPS around their policy on child protection being implemented next week. She encouraged the group to contact Julie Butner from QPS directly to talk further about this. Queried whether Department would increase funding to increase staff in DV services to deal with additional child witnesses coming out of this policy.
- Linked up with Julie Butner – New policy comes out 25th Feb 2005. New policy says that when general duties officer goes to DV incident they have responsibility to ask themselves “are there any children who normally reside with the perpetrator or victim?” (whether at scene or not at the time) and regardless of relationship to the perpetrator or victim eg. Grandchildren, foster children. Officer writes report – goes to JAB or CIB officer with child protection skills. These officers then decide if significant or minor risk. If significant = SCAN; if minor = reported to DCS but try and connect those children with services in the community eg. DV service, schools, health etc. Want 'protective behaviours' information given to the child. If get three or four incidences involving children may then assess as significant risk and they will end up at SCAN.
- Julie queried whether there would be negative reaction from 'mums' and DV workers who don't want reports going to child safety.
- Agreement needs to be signed between QPS (Assistant Commissioner of Region) and DV Services so they can share CRISP 1922 reports before they begin referrals. This will also help get around section 82 in the Act about disclosing information.
- DV orders and children – issue for police. Drafted policy changes around this to encourage police officers to put children on the form. The group mentioned that QPS will need to speak to magistrates about this. Julie felt the DV Act should be amended to make it mandatory to add the children's name to the order.

Future for Indigenous services

Defunding of ATSIC. Government's response is that ICCs will coordinate all the government departments who must provide indigenous services. It was queried where the 'ATSIC money' was and whether it was going to mainstream services who would then provide indigenous programs.

Future of PADV and SAAP funding/ Clearing House funding

- PADV are having a two day seminar in Brisbane on March 21st and 22nd at Women's Infolink to update people. Money finishes in June 2005 – there is no indication what will happen next.

- The Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House is funded under PADV and they have asked people to write to Kay Patterson to support further funding.
- Pauline advised that SAAP Mark IV finishes this year. Evaluation showed that SAAP met its mandates and that the SAAP community was at full capacity and to meet unmet demand would need a 40% increase in funding. Instead, government is offering a reduction in money to the states. In the past, in general, the Commonwealth paid 58% of SAAP and states 42%. This year offering only 50% and up to states to make up shortfall. This will impact on shelters if states cannot or will not make up shortfall.

Qld D&FV Council

- A discussion was held about the council and who would be nominating around the regions. It was strongly suggested that coordinators from regional DV services should apply for their own regions.

Dept. of Child Safety

- There was a discussion about SCAN teams, the new reporting requirements of the police and whether DV services could/should be included.

WESNET update

- Pauline informed the group that she is now the National Chair of Wesnet. This is an independent position so the Qld rep was vacant. However, this has now been filled by Jane Doyle, Women's Centre, Cairns; proxy Heather Selke from Ruth's Women's Shelter in Cairns.
- Research re review of PADV recommendations on homelessness for DV women. OFW negotiating changes for report. Will publish report but only the recommendations. However will have CD with the full report in it.
- Wesnet annual report being sent out soon with a letter and memento recognizing their 10 years in existence.
- Producing a 'playful' booklet about the state of children in DV in Australia – being developed by a group called Purple Kangaroo and Julie Oberin is part of that group.
- Also mentioned the Marie Clare magazine campaign that is seeking women fill in petition to demand that emotional abuse gets changed in the legislation to become a crime.
- Pauline informed the group that Amnesty International is doing an Australian Plan of Action to address violence against women. Need people to support this campaign.

Centrelink policy

- Centrelink has recently sent out a letter re its new policy of allowing crisis payments for perpetrators of DV who are unable to return to the family home because of a court order. Eligibility for this payment is the same as for other crisis payments plus some additional criteria including evidence of police involvement in the removal of the perpetrator from the family home (see *Guide to Social Security Law Sections 3.7.4.20 and 3.7.4.30*).

SDVAG networking re child referrals

- Wendy raised on behalf of Pam Godsell about supporting protocols between services re child protection responses. Decided to refer this item to the State Wide Women's Services meeting in June. This will be an agenda item and action decided at that meeting.

Joint Women's Services Meeting

- Pauline informed the group that another state wide women's services meeting (CWRG, NQWSN, QDVSN) has been proposed to be held on 22nd June 2005 the day before our QDVSN meeting.

Telephone link with Linda Manning, Women's Sector Community Engagement project

- Women's sector engagement project funded and came on line May 2004. Ends middle of April 2005. Grant from OFW. Steering committee focus on strategic direction. Core group of about 8 or 9 women. Two arms to project – steering committee issues and key issues in women's sector. Publication called *Making Waves* comes out fortnightly – provides a resource to link the sector.
- Employment issues in women's sector – draft stage. Snap shot of women's recruitment in November 2004. Nine services had advertised 12 positions that month – found by January, eight of the twelve positions had to be readvertised, and six remained unfilled. Putting paper together (two page snapshot with recommendations) and will bring out next week. Critical issue of capacity of sector is ability to attract qualified workers. Leads then to funding issues. Also lack of training within degrees on women's issues and feminism. In addition, research identified drain on sector due to Child Safety recruitment.
- Viability and women's services – 10 services doing viability survey. Will bring out paper next week on these findings.
- Steering committee – meeting since end of August. One key focus was looking at making action spaces for women and working more collaboratively across the sector. Action space = Festival for women 3rd and 4th March 2005.
- Model for 'Policy Advocacy Forum' – describes a way of trying to work across the sector in a different approach. Will be presenting this at the Women's Festival and in *Making Waves*.

DVConnect/Police issues

- Di informed the group that DVConnect have recently corresponded with the Police asking that if a woman states she has been beaten around the head or they observe that, they should take her to the hospital. This has arisen from the death of a woman who recently died in a motel after a DV incident.

Faxback Conference - Townsville

- Conference being held on 7th and 8th April. Encouraging police to attend. Pauline asked the regional services to forward on to police in their area.